STAFF NEEDED, TRAPOLIN SAYS

T-P 6-21-69

Letter on Crime Probe Sent to Council

A staff is needed to properly handle a possible City Council probe into organized crime, Ivor A. Trapolin, chairman of the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Crime and Delinquency, said.

Trapolin also said that a person from outside the city may be best to head such an investigation.

He made his suggestions in a letter to the City Council, specifically addressed to Council President John J. Petre.

Trapolin, chairman of a group which warned that organized crime is trying to take over tourism and other businesses here, said that if a staff is not available the probe will be a waste of time.

HEARING READIED

Petre said Thursday that the Council is ready to conduct a hearing on organized crime but wants detailed information from both Trapolin's committee and the New Orleans Police Department.

Petre further said that the Council "will insist that innuendoes, generalities and nonspecfic information" be made clear.

Trapolin one week ago stated neither Mayor Victor H. Schiro nor District Attorney Jim Garrison met the organized crime problem headon.

Chief Administrative Officer Bernard B. Levy Tuesday asked Trapolin to be more specific.

Trapolin then went before the City Council Thursday to urge its members to undertake the probe.

In his letter Friday, Trapolin wrote, ". . . There is need for a staff to handle the investigation and to arrange the type of wit-

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CRIME PROBE

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nesses necessary to make such a hearing meaningful.

"If not, it will be a waste of many people's time, and will not produce the desired results.

'EXPERT NEEDED'

"An expert in the field of organized crime not connected with any local governmental agency is needed to head such an investigation. It might be that such a person from out of the city could be obtained.

"The Commission Council knows that the Mayor's Advisory Committee on Crime and Delinquency has been given no funds, no staff, no secretary, with which to operate.

"Therefore it is impossible for either me, individually, or the Mayor's Advisory Committee to furnish you with the comprehensive type of evidence that is needed.

"I will be glad to meet with representatives of the Council in an effort to work out a type of procedure that could be followed that would bring forth knowledgeable witnesses with specific evidence."

Trapolin also commented Friday that almost every law enforcement expert who has visited New Orleans agrees that organized crime is well established here.

"Owen Neff, who is associated with the federal government, says it. Henry Peterson, a deputy U.S. attorney general, says it. Ralph Salerno, a New York City authority on organized crime, says it," Trapolin said.

However, earlier in the week, Levy said, "Mr. Trapolin has a responsibility to name names. He can do no less if he has proof and is sincere."